

What is claimed is

1. A network monitor for passively monitoring traffic on a dedicated packet-switched data network connecting network controllers controlling associated network elements of an automatically switched optical transport network; said monitor being adapted and programmed
 - to filter protocol frames of a predefined protocol type by which said network controllers advertise the network topology and status; and
 - to extract from the filtered protocol frames information about the topology and status of the transport network and displays these information graphically to a user.
2. A network monitor according to claim 1, comprising a sniffer module adapted and programmed to capture data from the data network connection, or read data from a previously capture file and to pass said captured data to an evaluation module adapted and programmed to extract said topology and status information from the captured data and to display these information graphically on a display.
3. A network monitor according to claim 1, wherein said frames of a predefined protocol type are OSPF frames comprising information about routing controllers, border nodes of domains and links to and from the border nodes.

4. A network monitor according to claim 1, adapted and programmed to represent domains as indicated by their corresponding routing controllers as smaller circles along a circle line of a larger circle.

5. A network monitor according to claim 1, adapted and programmed to represent links with idle capacity in a first color and busy links in a second color.

6. A network monitor according to claim 1, further comprising a command line interface to one of the network controllers adapted to program said connected network controller to broadcast a request for an immediate update of topology and status information and/or to program said network controller to set up a new connection and/or perform other configuration changes in said automatically switched optical transport network.

7. A network monitor according to claim 1, further being adapted and programmed to detect a mismatch between any two filtered protocol frames and display these frames as ASCII text to a user.

8. A method of passively monitoring traffic on a dedicated packet-switched data network connecting network controllers controlling associated network elements of an automatically switched optical transport network; said method comprising the steps of

- filtering protocol frames of a predefined protocol type by which said network controllers advertise the network topology and status;
- extracting from the filtered protocol frames information about the topology and status of the transport network and
- displaying these information graphically to a user.